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### EDITORIAL NOTES.

The next regular meeting of the State Society will be held at Del Monte, April 16th, 17th, 18th, 1907; the Council is required

#### STATE SOCIETY.

by the by-laws to meet the day before (the 15th). Special rates have been made by the hotel and postal-card notices have been sent out to all members. If you intend to go and have not yet sent in the return postal giving your wishes as to rooms, etc., do so at once, for we are advised that the hotel may be quite full about that time in April. The usual arrangement as to railroad rates has been secured. The full fare is to be paid for the going trip, and the purchaser of the ticket *must secure from the agent at the time he buys the ticket, a receipt certificate.* This must be signed by the secretary and upon presentation to the agent at Del Monte the return ticket will be sold at one-third fare. The scientific program is progressing rapidly and there will be offered many topics of interest for your discussion. Unfortunately, owing to a necessary change in the date of publication of the JOURNAL, it will not be possible to publish a preliminary outline of the program; but it promises to be quite up to the excellent standard of the last few years. The symposium feature, found to be so satisfactory in the past, will be a striking portion of the present program. In addition to the scientific matters of interest, many very important problems, and matters affecting the Society and its welfare will come up for discussion, and every county society should be well represented. We all know what a beautiful place Del Monte is, and certainly those of

us who were fortunate enough to have attended the last meeting at that charming spot will not fail to attend the present session.

The JOURNAL has, on more than one occasion, referred to the somewhat curious attitude of the

#### SMALL FEES.

*Medical Examiner and Practitioner*, a monthly publication, supposedly issued in the interests of examiners for life insurance companies, toward the subject of reduced fees for examinations. This publication makes the plea that national, state and county medical organizations should not recognize the issue joined between the companies on the one side and the individual examiner on the other. That is exactly what the companies want. They know full well that physicians, as unorganized units, each acting for himself and without conference with his fellows, will perforce accept the ridiculous minimum fee of \$3.00; they know also that if we all stand together and refuse to accept this small fee, the companies will have to stop business or pay the \$5.00 fee. But the actual results of this campaign are discouraging. A physician in one of our Western states writes me of his experience. He absolutely refused to make the examinations for less than \$5.00—and he is now getting that fee. He states that, in a large territory, and despite the strenuous resolutions passed by various county societies, all the examiners save himself and one other are secretly accepting the \$3.00 fee. He says: "A man must value his own services in order to collect their value." "The profession has neither the backbone nor business sense sufficient to deserve \$5.00 for the work." His conclusions are: "(1) that the fight can be won and (2), that our profession will never win it." In some sections of our own state the fight has been won and \$5.00 is the minimum fee paid. Will it ever be won or the entire state? That depends upon the individual members of the various county societies and upon the honor of each one. The mere passage of resolutions will do nothing. If a man has not enough appreciation of his own worth and his own services to refuse to accept something less than they are worth, and if he will not be honest with himself and his fellows and abide by what he says he will do, the fight will never be won.

Is it worth while to be alive, or might one just as well be dead? "To be or not to be, that is the question." If one is going to

#### SOCIETY WORK.

live, why not live fully and helpfully and die with the knowledge that the world is at least no worse off for our having cumbered it for a brief space. There are so many things to be done, so much work waiting to one's hand, that it seems incredible that there can be any who may go through the world and live their lives without appreciating it. And for us, as physicians, there is perhaps more work than for others, who understand less well, all that needs to be done. We see every-

where the very poorest excuse for sanitary control. We see school buildings that are hygienic horrors. We see thousands of children put in jeopardy of health or life by uncontrolled association with fellow children affected with some contagious disease, and like themselves, unexamined at any time. We see others taking on a life's handicap in their early years because of some ocular defect undetected. We see public men living their entire lives not understanding the slightest particle of the ethics of our profession, not understanding us or our work or our aims or objects and having but slight respect for our profession, simply because we do not associate with and explain to them what little of our real position we could so readily make them understand. We see public institutions of town, city and state made political playthings at the expense of the sick and suffering and afflicted. We sit quietly by and permit all these, and many more crimes against our own good sense and the public welfare, and we do nothing. Mr. Bok, of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, has very ably and very truthfully put it distinctly up to us as being very largely responsible for the extent to which the nostrum evil has overwhelmed our country. Our inertia, our apathy and our failure to do our duty by the community are responsible for many things. Often the good work that a few men might do in a county is hindered or prevented by the petty jealousy of two or three men who will not do anything toward making an active county society themselves, nor will they permit the others to do what they should and would like to do. Is there no way of waking up those who are asleep? Is there no way of galvanizing a little life into some of our profession who are really two-thirds dead and don't know it?

None knows so well as the physician that it is not only wrong but dangerous to allow public health institutions to be political playthings. The average competent and reputable physician will not devote his time to "making good" with local politicians, nor to being a "good fellow" and a "glad hand artist" with the voters of his community merely to gain support that will eventually mean some political office. He is, as a rule, too busy with his study or his practice and he does not seem to realize that political work need not necessarily be done in the "glad hand" style. He thinks it must be so done, and so he wraps the ten talents of his influence in the covering of his self-esteem, and buries them; he allows his potential strength to lie dormant. It is true that there are many excellent physicians occupying political office and it is equally true that not all of them have secured such preferment by the "glad hand" method. Yet it is equally true that in the majority of cases where a considerable amount of "patronage" is concerned, positions do not go by professional worth, but because of voting influence. All this is, as we know full well, radically wrong. Public institutions for the care of the sick or afflicted should be under the management and control of the best in the profession of medicine, and not in the hands

of cheap politicians to be used for the maintenance of political prestige. This condition is presenting itself all over the United States. Very recently Dr. Frank Billings, of Chicago, appeared before the Illinois legislature and showed the solons of that state to what degradation the state institutions had fallen, through this system of political, rather than professional management. People get careless, morally as well as physically, and it is safe to say that not one voter in a thousand realizes just what the dangers of the present system of control for political aggrandizement mean to the sufferers in the care of the state. They do not know it, but we know it. Is it not our paramount duty to educate them?

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How are we going to bring about any betterment of this condition of things? By helping to take the control of our state, EDUCATIONAL which is the Legislature, out CAMPAIGN. of the hands of cheap and unworthy politicians. And how

can we help in doing that? By showing the better element in our various communities the actual and definite harm that is resulting from political control of the sick, and the tremendous expense to the state of lack of proper sanitary control. How many citizens do you suppose, for instance, realize the direct commercial value of full control of our streams and rivers by the State Board of Health? How many business men realize the direct monetary value of compulsory vaccination? How many, even of those who are on school boards or are school teachers, realize the value to the prospective citizen of a careful examination of school children, particularly of their eyes and ears? How many realize the fact that under skilled management a good many cases of insanity may be relieved and the patients restored to health and self-support, whereas under unskilled management the same persons will go on to a chronic, incurable condition? How many parsons realize the terrible harm they do to innocent people when they give testimonials to "patent medicines?" County societies in other states are waking up to the importance of these things. In Boston a series of public lectures by prominent physicians has been given, and reports are to the effect that they have been very successful. Fortunately, in our own state some county societies have also seen the importance and the value to the community of instructing the laity. In Santa Barbara a meeting was held recently between the county society and those connected with the schools, and is said to have been very instructive. One of the southern counties held a meeting some months ago to which many prominent citizens were invited, and the subject of tuberculosis was discussed. We can not too strongly urge these meetings upon our county societies. Get in touch with the people of your community; let them know what the medical profession is trying to do for them; let them see the danger which is in ignorance; show them that the quack is a danger to them and does not hurt us. It will be found that a large proportion of lay-